

**2019/2020 FIA World Endurance Championship
Round 5: Lone Star Le Mans**

Michelin's endurance racing tyres aim to deliver consistency and long-lasting performance at the fast, demanding Circuit of the Americas

Round 5 of the 2019/2020 FIA World Endurance Championship this weekend (February 22-23) will take teams to the Circuit of the Americas near Austin, Texas, USA. The 2020 Lone Star Le Mans will be the first of two back-to-back fixtures to take place in the United States, because Super Sebring (Florida) is scheduled to follow in March when the FIA WEC and IMSA WeatherTech SportsCar Championship join forces to entertain fans with two topflight endurance races, namely the 1,000 Miles of Sebring (WEC) on the Friday and the next day's 12 Hours of Sebring.


While the Sebring International Raceway is steeped in motor racing history, the 5.513-kilometre, 20-turn (9 right / 11 left) Texan circuit is far newer, since it was inaugurated in 2012. Even so, it lost no time emerging as a benchmark, technically challenging venue enjoyed as much by the drivers as it is by the fans who appreciate its ease of access and trademark cobra-shaped tower that overlooks the track.

The Circuit of the Americas has not been visited by the FIA WEC since 2017 and this year's Lone Star Le Mans will pack several new features in comparison. For one thing, its slot in the calendar has been brought forward by around two months, so the weather promises to be much colder – although still relatively mild –, while clouds and rain cannot be ruled out.

“The FIA World Endurance Championship returns to Austin after the 2017 race when ground temperatures reached more than 40°C,” observes **Pierre Alves**, the manager of Michelin's endurance racing programmes. “This time, we are there in winter and the temperature is likely to range from 10 to 20°C, and the weather promises to be changeable. With regard to tyres, the Circuit of the Americas is harder on tread compounds than it is on casings, and it's the only anticlockwise track on the calendar. The lap starts with a steep climb up to Turn 1 which calls for heavy braking that puts big constraints on the front tyres. The next nine corners enable the drivers to get good heat into their tyres before the second part of the circuit which comprises a long straight, more hard braking and a sequence of turns out of which the cars reaccelerate hard. Parts of the track have been resurfaced to iron out the many bumps, but fewer bumps mean higher speeds, and this equates to extra energy that our tyres will need to absorb.

“I would like to say a big thank you to our logistics team who had to divert the tyres originally intended for Sao Paolo to Austin at a very late stage. Thanks, too, to our factory in Clermont-Ferrand for their swift response when it came to making the soft tyres we need at Austin but which weren't planned for Brazil.”





Michelin's partners in **LMP1** will be able to choose between **MICHELIN 'SOFT HOT'** and **'MEDIUM'** tyres for the Lone Star Le Mans, while those competing in **LMP2** will have a choice between **SOFT** and **MEDIUM MICHELINS**.

All the **LMGTE Pro** and **LMGTE Am** teams have opted for a choice between **MICHELIN SOFT** and **MEDIUM** tyres for the Texan showdown.

In the case of wet weather, teams will be able to fit either **WETs** or **Full WETs**, while the **LMP1** prototypes will be able to run the versatile **MICHELIN Hybrid** which revels especially in drying conditions.

Free Practice 1 will begin at 8am local time on Saturday, February 22, followed by qualifying at 5:40pm, and the race itself which will start at midday Sunday.

